

In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 2-7 and 9, without prejudice, and amend claims 1 and 8 as follows:

1. (Cancelled) A pneumatic radial tire production method comprising the steps of:

forming a primary green tire including carcass layer;

forming a cylindrical belt tread assembly including belt layers;

transferring the belt tread assembly to the outer peripheral side of the primary green tire by use of a transfer apparatus; and

pressure-bonding the belt tread assembly to the primary green tire inflated in a toroidal shape,

wherein the primary green tire and the belt tread assembly are pressure-bonded to each other in a state where the transfer apparatus allows a center portion of the belt tread assembly to swell while holding both sides of the belt tread assembly,

wherein the transfer apparatus includes a plurality of holding members which hold the belt tread assembly from an outer peripheral side, and has a structure in which holding surfaces of the respective holding members are divided in a width direction of the belt tread assembly,

wherein a width of each of the divided holding surfaces of each holding member is set to 5 to 30% of a width of the innermost laminated belt layer, and

wherein each of the holding members has a pair of holding surfaces separated from each other in the width direction of the belt tread assembly, the pair of holding surfaces being arranged at positions at which they abut against two ends of the belt tread assembly.

2-7. (Cancelled)

8. (Currently Amended) A belt tread assembly transfer apparatus for transferring a belt tread assembly, comprising:

a plurality of holding members for holding the belt tread assembly from an outer peripheral side,

wherein holding surfaces of the respective holding members are divided in a width direction of the belt tread assembly,

wherein a width of each of the divided holding surfaces of each holding member is set to 5 to 30% of a width of the innermost laminated belt layer, and

wherein each of the holding members has a pair of holding surfaces separated from each other in the width direction of the belt tread assembly, the pair of holding surfaces being arranged at positions at which they abut against two ends of the belt tread assembly.

9. (Cancelled)